

Father Involvement - Encouraging Dads to be Involved

The California State PTA encourages fathers to be involved in their children's education and development. PTAs can promote father involvement at home and at school by educating parents about its importance, by encouraging fathers to be involved in PTA activities, and by sharing the ideas in this packet with the dads in their community to give them ideas on how to be involved.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

Parents are not only their children's first teachers, they are probably the most important teachers their children will ever have.

There is overwhelming evidence that parents' involvement in their children's lives and education makes a positive difference. An assumption has sometimes been made that "parent involvement" means "mother involvement." Fathers have often been the hidden parent. Their importance to children's financial well-being was widely accepted, but their contribution to other aspects of children's development was often assumed to be secondary to that of mothers.

FATHER INVOLVEMENT IS IMPORTANT

New research shows that the involvement of both the mother and the father is important. The male role model is a critical and essential ingredient in the learning process and life development of a child.

Fathers, no matter what their income or cultural background, can play a critical role in their children's education. When fathers or father figures are involved, children learn more, perform better in school, and exhibit healthier behavior. Even when fathers do not share a home with their children, their active involvement can have a lasting and positive impact.

GRANDFATHERS

The word grandparent to a child means "grand," meaning magnificent and wonderful. After all, many children will readily attest that grandma and grandpa always are happy to see them, let them stay up late and sleep in, cook their favorite foods, take them to

the mall to pick out a beloved toy, and listen attentively as they recount their dreams and disappointments.

Grandparents raising grandchildren is a growing phenomenon. In today's world, many children are being raised by their grandparents in the absence of their parents. Grandfathers are just as vital as fathers are as role models and companions to their grandchildren.

SEPARATION IS DIFFICULT FOR A CHILD

Fathers not living in close proximity to their children due to divorce, military commitments, or other circumstances, and father figures and grandfathers living apart from the children can still create and maintain a bond. Current technologies can bridge the barriers of geographic

distance. Letters and email can be exchanged to share daily activities, photos, videos of important life events, and even jokes. The Internet can be used to play games, tell stories, and do puzzles together in real time. Despite living far away from each other, there is still a need to connect and maintain a male bond.

NOW IS THE TIME TO INVOLVE FATHERS

The California State PTA is proud to provide this father involvement packet and encourages your PTA to reach out to fathers. For additional information and ideas on how to implement parent involvement programs at your school site please refer to the California State PTA Parents Empowering Parents (PEP) Guide and the California State PTA Toolkit. These items can be found on the California State PTA website, www.capta.org; the Toolkit also appears on the CD-ROM enclosed in this mailing.



HOW FATHER FRIENDLY IS YOUR PTA?

FATHER-FRIENDLY PROGRAM IDEAS

Many schools and organizations around the country have ingenious ways to encourage their father figures to participate. Here are just a few successful ideas.

Dads' Wall of Fame

Take photos of fathers and important males throughout the year at the school, on field trips, or just being involved at activity nights and meetings. Hang the photos on a Dads' Wall of Fame.

Fathers' Olympics

Invite families to participate in a day long barbeque that includes a Fathers' Olympics. Form father-child teams and plan Olympic-type events. Fun awards such as Slowest Team, Fastest Team, Team Who Looks the Most Alike, Tallest Team and Shortest Team can be presented.

Science Night

Feature a monthly science night led by fathers. Meet in the cafeteria for fun science experiments. (Plastic tablecloths are a must for these messy activities!) Or meet outside with telescopes and learn about the stars. Presentations from the local zoo, museums, and colleges can be arranged.

Reading Call to Action

Reading Call to Action asks dads and father figures to commit to reading to their child's classroom for half an hour. This allows dads with limited time to participate in children's classrooms. Dads can see their children's classes, friends, and teachers in an enjoyable setting and become familiar with the school. Programs such as The Cat in the Hat and Read Across America, <http://www.nea.org/readacross/index.html>, can boost excitement and encourage participation. Invite local service clubs to the school to read to the children.

School Sports Night

Arrange a Family Sports Night at the school. Invite local high school, college, or professional athletes and coaches to come talk with the children and share their experiences. Serve hot dogs, chips or other sporting event favorites.

Family Game Night

Encourage dads to play games with their families on a weeknight. Survey children about which games they played. Keep and display charts in a visible location to determine the most popular games. Families will be excited to share their favorite games.

MY PTA...

yes no

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|-----|-----|--|
| ___ | ___ | Includes fathers in programs or activities. |
| ___ | ___ | Offers programs or activities for fathers. |
| ___ | ___ | Provides programs and activities for dads that focus on the strengths of dads. |
| ___ | ___ | Uses activities, materials, individual, and group exercises in its programs that appeal to fathers. |
| ___ | ___ | Offers parenting classes that use father-specific curricula and educational materials. |
| ___ | ___ | Involves fathers in decision-making and delivers programs and activities that target dads. |
| ___ | ___ | Periodically surveys fathers to determine their needs, concerns, and interests related to the PTA's programs and activities. |
| ___ | ___ | Offers or supports special events that celebrate fathers. |
| ___ | ___ | Invites fathers to participate in the full range of programs or services (e.g., classes, groups, parties, child care, field trips, outings, celebrations, and other events). |
| ___ | ___ | Awards/honors fathers for involvement in PTA and in the lives of their children. |
| ___ | ___ | Provides effective measurement tools and methodologies for evaluating programs and services directed at dads. |

Doughnuts With Dad

Work schedules sometimes make it hard for dads to come to events. Try a Doughnuts With Dad event, a once a month before-school breakfast for dads and their kids. Fathers will enjoy eating with their children and their friends while experiencing the child's world.

Dads' Sports Night

Some dads like to watch sports rather than play, so reserve blocks of tickets at a local sports event. Attend a professional baseball game, college sports event, or even watch Monday Night Football in the cafeteria.

Cake Decorating

Who says dads can't cook? Ask children and fathers to bring a plain cake to school, home baked or purchased, for a Cake Decorating Contest. PTA can provide the decorating supplies. When the decorating is finished, present awards. Fathers and their children can enjoy a cake dessert afterwards.

Hey, Dad! Have Some Fun!

FATHERS CAN BE INVOLVED IN A CHILD'S EDUCATION

Be a role model
Take an active interest
Meet the teacher
 ask questions about classroom expectations
 know when school starts/ends
Introduce yourself to the principal
 ask questions about school expectations
Create goals with your child
Create expectations with your child
Attend parent conferences
Talk about school
 friends
 lessons
 attendance
 feelings
Make homework a priority
 have child follow a routine
 give help if needed
 review the work
 set a good example
Speak positively about school
Speak positively about learning
Talk about choosing classes
Join the PTA
Attend school and PTA meetings
Serve on committees at school
Serve on committees in the PTA
Adjust your work hours if you can
Attend special events at school

FATHERS CAN TEACH THEIR CHILDREN

Talk about values, being responsible,
 respecting others
Teach your child
 new skills
 how to have fun
 how to be safe
 about reaching goals
 about having patience
 about working as a team
 how to have a routine
 about having good work habits
Share your skills and interests
Use TV wisely and limit TV activities
 watch with the child
 know what the child is watching
 talk about what you see
 ask questions/share opinions

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AT SCHOOL FATHERS CAN

- Assist teachers in gathering resources for units of study
- Assist in science and mathematics laboratories
- Share collections and discuss careers, travels, hobbies, and other areas of special knowledge
- Assist teachers in academic subject matter areas
- Supervise students who are taking tests
- Serve as mentors
- Serve as tutors
- Listen to students read
- Play games at recess
- Monitor the halls
- Work with disabled students
- Help prepare assembly programs
- Discuss aspects of safety
- Assist in the computer lab
- Help supervise playground and lunchroom activities
- Assist students in boarding buses
- Have lunch with your student
- Assist with after-school activities
- Serve on the School Crisis Team

Dads For Education Program, Jefferson County Public Schools, Louisville, Kentucky

Hey, Dad! Have Some Fun!

SEVEN SUPER THINGS FATHERS CAN DO

- 1 Talk often with your children from the day they are born.
- 2 Hug them, hold them, and respond to their needs and interests.
- 3 Listen carefully as your child communicates with you.
- 4 Read aloud to your children every day, even when they are babies. Play and sing with them often.
- 5 Say “yes” and “I love you” more than you say “no” and “don’t.”
- 6 Ensure a safe, orderly, and predictable environment, wherever they are.
- 7 Set limits on their behavior and discipline them calmly, not harshly.

*Early Childhood Head Start Task Force
U.S. Departments of Education and Health & Human Services*

FUN ACTIVITIES

Participate in water activities
Cook
Work on computers
Play games
Work in the garden
Play math games
Watch movies
Do crossword/jigsaw puzzles
Kick back on swings
Read together
Listen to music
Do a science project
Create a hobby
Build a model
Build things together
Go

bicycle riding
fly kites
out to eat
bowling
on outings
camping
to the library
hiking
for walks
play cards
swimming
skating
shopping
fishing
to a park
play chess/checkers

CHARACTERISTICS OF GOOD FATHERS

While each father is a unique person who parents in his own style, there are some characteristics that good fathers have in common:

Involvement
Unwavering Love
Support
Consistency
Discipline



Dads, Grandpas, Uncles, Brothers, Friends ... A child is counting on **YOU**
You are a provider - You are a protector - You are important
You are a teacher - You are a friend - You make a difference
You are a role model - You can influence your child's success

BE INVOLVED

Hey, Dad! Have Some Fun!

How many of the words can you and your child find and circle?
When finished, give yourselves a star, hang it on the refrigerator
and celebrate a job well done!

ACADEMICS

ACTIVITIES

BICYCLE

BOWLING

CAMPING

CHAPERON

CHESS

CHILDREN

COACHING

COOKING

COMMITMENT

COMPUTERS

DADS

EDUCATION

ENCOURAGING

FATHERS

FISHING

GAMES

GARDEN

HOMEWORK

INVOLVEMENT

KITES

LISTENING

MATH

MOVIES

NUTRITION

OUTINGS

PARENTING

E	B	O	W	L	I	N	G	S	G	J	P	H	K	C	P	N	L	E	M
L	A	H	U	W	S	T	E	S	C	R	S	C	O	O	K	I	N	G	N
C	I	Z	S	T	T	T	T	W	A	L	Q	I	D	M	S	Q	E	O	C
Y	S	A	P	G	I	F	G	A	M	E	S	N	E	M	E	U	N	P	H
C	A	R	V	K	N	N	Z	X	P	Z	M	V	J	I	L	W	C	P	E
I	F	Y	E	V	I	I	G	Z	I	Q	U	O	I	T	Z	C	O	A	S
B	E	K	D	H	Y	A	W	S	N	U	O	L	R	M	Z	N	U	R	S
N	T	U	C	C	T	J	B	S	G	R	P	V	A	E	U	E	R	E	K
G	Y	A	S	P	U	A	P	M	O	V	I	E	S	N	P	D	A	N	A
A	O	W	R	N	F	E	F	I	H	T	A	M	R	T	H	R	G	T	T
C	L	L	E	O	Z	Z	I	D	Z	P	R	E	C	O	I	A	I	I	I
T	E	S	T	R	O	P	S	U	A	G	A	N	P	F	C	G	N	N	N
I	D	R	U	E	R	D	H	T	K	D	U	T	D	A	H	A	G	G	G
V	O	I	P	P	E	E	I	I	I	T	S	I	D	K	I	X	O	E	U
I	M	A	M	A	R	E	N	N	R	A	C	E	A	O	L	H	T	C	P
T		P	O	H	N	A	G	I	J	K	M	Y	E	I	D	O	A	N	U
I	E	E	C	C	A	Q	T	E	I	I	N	G	O	U	R	V	A	E	E
E	L	R	E	I	U	I	Y	O	C	U	G	N	I	N	E	T	S	I	L
S	O	T	G	A	O	E	I	S	O	U	B	F	A	E	N	I	O	C	U
A	R	A	M	N	E	N	O	I	T	A	C	U	D	E	I	B	O	S	O

PATIENCE

PTA

PTSA

PUZZLES

READING

REPAIRS

ROLE MODEL

SAFETY

SCIENCE

SKATING

SPORTS

SWINGS



THE MISSION STATEMENT OF THE CALIFORNIA STATE PTA

The mission of the California State PTA
is to represent our members and to empower and support them
with skills in advocacy, leadership, and communication
to positively impact the lives of all children.

Reaffirmed March 2004